

Rural Legislative Edition



"The success of a rural community's efforts to build a vibrant local economy lies with the vision and courage of its local leaders. Our role is to help such leaders translate their vision into action."

Jeff Gochnour
Director
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Business & Economic
Development

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Much of this issue of "The Rural BEAR Newsletter" will be dedicated to the current session of the Utah State Legislature. While those of us here at the Utah Division of Business and Economic Development are dedicated to helping rural communities, those of you at the grassroots level have a much greater impact on your legislators than those of us at the state level working on your behalf.

It is essential that you take the time to contact your legislators regarding any legislation that will impact your community either positively or negatively. Each year there are more bills filed than your state elected officials can review in detail. Your assistance in helping them understand the implications of various bills and your feelings about how they impact you will be well received.

Rural Resource of the Month:

"Welcome to the Utah State Legislature" Website

The days when those of us in rural Utah were pretty much in the dark about what was happening during the Legislative sessions are over thanks to the Internet. Take a few minutes to visit the "Welcome to the Utah State Legislature" website (<http://le.utah.gov>) for an up-to-date summary of what's happening during the session.

As you would expect, the website provides you with information about your State Senators and State Representatives. However, the site also provides full text of all bills and status reports on all legislation as well as agendas and minutes of committee meetings. You can search for bills by their sponsor, their subject, or the committee to which they are assigned. You can also create your individual tracking system to easily follow only those bills in which you are interested.

As you will see later in this newsletter, there are many things happening "on the hill" that impact rural Utah. This website is your gateway to becoming informed and involved.

Getting To Know Us



Bim Oliver

For the past ten years, Bim Oliver has served as the state coordinator of Utah's Main Street Program, which provides communities throughout the state with services and resources for strengthening and revitalizing their downtown business districts.

Prior to becoming the State Main Street Coordinator, Bim worked in the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget on statewide planning issues and budgetary analysis.

Originally from Virginia, Bim has lived in Utah for nearly 20 years. He and his wife, a glass artist, live in Sugarhouse with two cats and a pooch. Their son attends college in Washington state.

On the Hill

Bills Impacting Rural Utah's Economy

At any one time, there are dozens of bills proposed that have some kind of impact on rural Utah's economy. We would like to highlight a few of the more significant bills and encourage you to visit <http://le.utah.gov> to learn more about any legislation that catches your eye. Other than a brief explanation of each piece of legislation, there are no recommendations. It is your responsibility to find out more about the bill and take whatever steps you deem appropriate. Certainly, the single most effective thing you could do is to contact your legislators personally.

Bill #	Sponsored By	Brief Comment
SB19	Senator Blackham	Sales and use tax exemptions on equipment used for renewable or biomass energy or fuel production.
SB199	Senator Blackham	Incentives for State Agencies to contract with rural companies for IT and other services.
SB74	Senator Dmitrich	Allows property around some rural airports to become an "Aerospace and Aviation Development Zone".
SB50	Senator Hatch	Promotes improved rural input and coordination of rural economic development and planning efforts.
SB64	Senator Hickman	Provides allocation of Medicaid funds to small and rural hospitals.
SCR003	Senator Thomas	Supports Hill Air Force Base. Hill provides contracts to rural and urban firms statewide.
SB124	Senator Killpack	Limits ability for communities to use sales and use taxes for economic development incentives.
SB208	Senator Knudson	Provides funding source to allow Utah tourism promotion to become competitive with other states.
SB240	Senator Allen	Creates Motion Picture Task Force.
SB190	Senator Stephenson	Sales and use tax exemption for film, television, and video companies to allow competition with other states.
SB204 HB311 HB313	Sen. Thomas, Rep. Adams, Rep. Gowans	Content not yet available, but all three bills address something involving Redevelopment Agencies (RDAs). RDAs are a key local economic development tool.
SB237	Senator Blackham	Provides amendments to the Pioneer Community Program. This program includes the Main Street Initiative.
HB64	Rep. Allen	Local option sales tax for recreational and zoological facilities as well as botanical, cultural, and zoological organizations in cities <u>located in second class counties</u> .
HB256	Rep. Allen	Expansion of the State of Utah's economic development web page to further support Utah businesses.

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Bill #	Sponsored By	Brief Comment
HJR23	Rep. Allen	Urges study of incentives for film industry production in Utah.
HB333	Rep. Butters	Language not yet available, but is entitled "Signage on Highways."
HB75	Rep. Clark	DCED may use up to 20% of the Industrial Assistance Fund for economic development opportunities.
HB74	Rep. Ferry	Extends sales and use tax exemption for steel industry. Very important to Box Elder County.
HB231	Rep. Bennion	Limits ability of state agencies to pursue federal grants in behalf of rural and other projects. May also impact Community Impact Board.
HB359	Rep. Butters	Use of mineral lease monies by the Utah State Fair.

Technology and Rural Utah

What's Up With Utah Smart Sites?

Snow College Smart Site (Ephraim): Governor Walker participated in the ribbon cutting for this new facility developed specifically for Smart Site firms by Snow College (<http://www.snow.edu/>) and the Sanpete County Economic Development Office (<http://www.sanpetecounty.org/>).



SDT Chief Operating Officer Chad Woolley, Governor Olene Walker
And Sanpete County Economic Development Director Sally East

Skyline Drive Technology (Mt. Pleasant): Fresh from developing a website for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Skyline Drive Technology (SDT) (<http://www.skylinedt.com/overview.html>) is currently subcontracting to provide wireless communications technologies for the U.S. Army.

Eminence Management Consulting (St. George): This new smart site (<http://www.gotoeminence.com>) has announced it will open in the Tonaquint Center where it will offer medical practice management services such as e-claims processing, HIPPA compliance audits, and managed care compensation. They will also provide accounting services, IT consulting, and marketing.

The price of
apathy towards
public affairs is
to be ruled by
evil men.
-Plato

We're on the Web!

<http://dced.utah.gov>

Snapshot Multimedia (Loa): One of Utah's newest Smart Sites has already created three new jobs offering a range of services ranging from sign making and website design to digital photography and multimedia production (<http://snapshotmedia.photorelect.com>).



Steton Technology Group (Santa Clara): Steton Technology Group (<http://steton.com>) will provide Burger King Corporation with mobile auditing software to support quality assurance and product audits. They will also offer an online seminar on February 19th entitled "How Homeland Security Regulations Will Impact the Food Industry" and how Steton products can help.

Footprints (Moab): Footprints (<http://www.footprints-inc.com/footprints-moab>) was awarded a contract renewal by Boeing to provide ongoing support and enhancements to mission-critical aircraft manufacturing process software developed previously. The contract renewal included a substantial budget increase reflecting Boeing's high level of confidence in the value of Footprints services.

College of Eastern Utah - San Juan Center (Blanding): Eleven students who completed a special competency curriculum in medical coding are being hired by Salt Lake City medical coding firm Aviacode (<http://aviacode.com>) as remote medical coders.

LearnKey (St. George): Microsoft's website features Learnkey's (<http://learnkey.com>) new video-based training for Microsoft Producer for Microsoft Office PowerPoint 2003. (<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/technologies/Producer/partners/learnkey.aspx>).

Diversified Agriculture Conference

We're Talking More Than Cows and Plows

The Utah Division of Business and Economic Development's BEAR Program is proud to join Utah State University Extension Service, the Sanpete County Economic Development Office, and several other fine sponsors in supporting the Diversified Agriculture Conference. The conference will be held in Ephraim on February 25-27.

We strongly believe the future of Utah's small farms and ranches lies in their ability to adapt to new markets and opportunities. This conference spotlights the creativity of your rural farming and ranching neighbors.

Sessions will focus on opportunities such as organic farming, native seeds, pheasant hunting, dude ranching, raising elk, composting, agri-entertainment, and small scale food processing. There will also be sessions on a wide range of issues relative to farm business management, regulations, and resources. For more information, visit <http://extension.usu.edu/cooperative/agribusiness/index.cfm/cid.371/tid.762>.

